DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

MEMORANDUM
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

March 18, 1981

TO: CA/OCS - Ed Martinez

THRU: ARA/CEN - Mike Barry
ARA/CEN - Richard Brown

FROM: ARA/CEN - Jim Bell

SUBJECT: ARA/CEN Contacts with Salvadoran Embassy Concerning Sullivan Case

DEPARTMENT OF STATE/CPC AMB 1984
REVIEWED BY DATE MAR 1 5 1984
RDS or XDS EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS
DECLASSIFIED/RELEASABLE
RELEASE DENIED
PA OR FOI EXEMPTIONS

Per your request of 2/19 I arranged to meet with Ambassador Aquino to discuss allegations by Sullivan family member that Salvadoran Embassy in Washington, D.C. had not been satisfactorily responsive to family's efforts to obtain information on missing journalists whereabouts.

Ambassador Aquino did not deny that he had frequently failed to return calls from Sullivan family members but insisted that his reluctance stemmed from his inability to help, rather than any desire to stonewall or discourage family's efforts. When asked if he would be willing to designate an officer in his Embassy as a specific contact for the family and also if he would bring up Sullivan case during following week while in El Salvador on consultation with Ministry of Foreign Relations, Ambassador Aquino agreed, and promised to get back to me with specifics on his return.

Per your request of 2/23 I called Lic. Jose Ramirez Zepeda, Secretary and General Consul of Salvadoran Embassy on 2/25 to ask his help in finding out if Sullivan had gotten a journalist's visa from Salvador's NY Consul and, if so, for how long was it valid.

Ramirez called me back same day to say that Sullivan had obtained a businessman's visa (which is the same visa routinely issued to journalists) on 12/24/80 at 11:00 a.m. Moreover, according to Ramirez, actual validity

of visa is determined by Salvadoran immigration officials at airport on arrival in El Salvador.

Having not heard from Ambassador Aquino for several weeks I called on 3/18 to remind him of his commitments. The Ambassador apologized for his failure to respond and attributed it more to the strain of his recent resignation rather than neglect. Ambassador Aquino then informed me that Lic. Roberto Jimenez Ortiz, Minister-Counselor of the Embassy, would be Sullivan family's contact at Embassy and could be reached at 202/265-3480. With respect to his bringing up the Sullivan case while on consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Relations while in El Salvador, the Ambassador indicated that Foreign Relations officials told him they were not involved in case and therefore had no inside knowledge.

Comment: Since Ambassador Aquino went to his consultations fully suspecting that he was going to be replaced as Salvadoran Ambassador to US and since this was indeed the case, I suspect the personal implications of his removal left little time or energy for pursuing the Sullivan case. End comment.